

OUR MENTAL HEALTH



LEN MCCULLOCH

Anxiety, panic attack: Help is available

Anxiety Disorders have many faces. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, a panic disorder is one type of several anxiety disorders.

A person with generalized anxiety disorder is haunted by chronic worrying, typically about many things they are unable to control. Their worry is unrealistic and is generally accompanied by a range of physical symptoms. Specific phobias are anxiety reactions to objects or events outside of oneself such as small rooms, thunderstorms, spiders, and elevators.

Agoraphobia is said to exist when anxiety is so pervasive that a person is homebound, unable to venture out into the feared environment under any circumstances. This was portrayed well by the actor Sean Connery in the movie, *Finding Forester* in which the Pulitzer Prize winner, William Forester, was a recluse, unable to leave his apartment without experiencing extreme anxiety symptoms.

Obsessive compulsive disorder is an anxiety disorder characterized by having to follow certain routines and check things repeatedly and/or preoccupation with numbers or words.

Posttraumatic stress disorder is a form of anxiety disorder characterized by a reaction to a traumatic event where one experiences feelings of helplessness, horror and fear. These reactions may be short-lived or chronic and classic examples include the Vietnam Veteran Syndrome and, more recently, the World Trade Center, Terrorist Bombing Syndrome.

Panic attacks

Panic attacks contain some of the features found in many of the above various anxiety disorders. A panic attack is defined by the Association for Advanced Behavior Therapy as a sudden rush of intense fear or dread, which is accompanied by several physical symptoms or thoughts which may include shortness of breath, dizziness, feeling faint or unsteady, pounding heart, trembling, sweating, choking sensation, nausea, feeling that things are not real, numbness or tingling in the extremities, hot flashes or cold chills, chest pains and fear of going crazy, losing control, having a

■ In a true panic attack, these symptoms are not the result of real medical condition but are an extreme stress reaction in which the autonomic nervous system is temporarily out of control.

heart attack or dying.

In a true panic attack, these symptoms are not the result of real medical condition but are an extreme stress reaction in which the autonomic nervous system is temporarily out of control.

National statistics tell us that one of ten Americans suffer an anxiety disorder at some time in their lives. Full-blown panic attacks are said to be experienced by as many as 14 million Americans. The distinctive feature of a panic attack is the suddenness with which fear is experienced, seemingly, "out of the blue" with no obvious outside cause.

The average age at which treatment is sought for panic attacks is in the mid-30s, although the disorder is seen in children as well as the elderly. Panic attacks, in many ways, become like phobias, but instead of being afraid of a specific object or situation, panic sufferers are afraid of their own bodily sensations.

A psychological vulnerability develops which includes a belief that the physical symptoms of anxious arousal (e.g., shortness of breath or dizziness, etc.) are harmful or threatening and difficult to predict or control. These beliefs seem to form the basis of an ongoing dread of the return of panic. Most sufferers are prone to attacks

Please see ANXIETY, C12

WELCOME TO THE INTERNATIONAL VISITORS COUNCIL OF METROPOLITAN DETROIT

BY RENEE SKOGLIND
STAFF WRITER
rskoglin@oe.homecomm.net

It's the most prestigious international visitors' program in the land. Alumni include Margaret Thatcher, Tony Blair, Anwar Sadat and the current interim prime minister of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai. For thirty years, members of the International Visitors Council of Metropolitan Detroit - one of 96 such councils in the United States - have been hosting foreign diplomats, future political leaders and leading business professionals, all sponsored by the U.S. Department of State.

And most of the hospitality takes place in the intimacy of American homes.

"It's a fascinating activity because all the people who come are so gracious and so accommodating," said Nelda Czubiak of Farmington Hills. She and her husband, Tom, have been IVC Detroit hosts for 25 years.

Czubiak said her dinner menu for foreign guests is always "strictly American." She serves up platters of old-fashioned hot roast, and they love it. She admires her guests' adaptable taste buds and questions if her own would be so adventurous if she were in another country.

"I would probably have a fit. First of all, I have a touchy stomach."

For members of the IVC Detroit, food plays a central role in hosting. Most hosts strive to create a memorable experience.

"A lot of people like to do a typical Thanksgiving dinner, whether it is Thanksgiving or not, or they do a Fourth of July picnic," said Gretchen Hitch Kirkpatrick of Bloomfield Village. IVC Detroit's past executive director, who retired in 1995 after 22 years.

Sometimes there are humorous cultural misunderstandings, said Hitch Kirkpatrick. She recalled when an IVC Detroit host once planned a backyard barbecue. The women's foreign guests were confused. They wondered why they all had to go outside and start a fire when there was such a beautiful stove in the kitchen.

However, there's nothing like being invited into a host home for dinner, said current IVC Detroit Executive Director Julie Oldani. It gives visitors "a window into how we do things." The atmosphere is casual, and the demands of a busy day are stripped away.

"One of our past presidents said the best business is always discussed after 5 o'clock. You can relax, and the real bonds of friendship are formed," she said.

Understanding

IVC Detroit sponsors two programs: the International Visitors Program, which hosts dignitaries chosen by U.S. embassies in their



A good host: Jonathan Swift, director of International Studies at Madonna University in Livonia and board member of IVC Detroit, enjoys entertaining international guests in his Bloomfield Hills home.

■ 'It's a fascinating activity because all the people who come are so gracious and so accommodating.'

Nelda Czubiak
IVC Detroit host

own countries, and the Community Connection Program, which hosts professional administrators and business entrepreneurs from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.

Both programs help dispel stereotypes.

Hosting "lends itself to building a sense of global unity," said Chuck Nagt of Livonia, who works in planning and public relations for the Ford Research Laboratory in Dearborn. He and his wife, Teresa, have been IVC Detroit members for three years.

Acting as a host family has been "surprisingly comfortable," he said. Most dinners are kept informal, with conversation centering on family, friends, jobs, education, lifestyles and general income levels.

Please see IVC, C12

Ready to barbecue?

These "boys from Belarus" were Memorial Days guests of Sherry Kammer two years ago.



Local group hosts event to stop massive dog killings

Amazing: More than 20,000 docile greyhounds are killed in the U.S. every year because they don't run fast enough. Still greyhound racing is legal in many states.



LANA NINI

It's a legal and profitable and the fact that these poor greyhounds live in cages 22 hours a day is ignored. It's also ignored that once the dogs don't make money for their owners, they're sold to research labs, sold to Mexican and South American racetracks, euthanized or

■ The hundreds of cases of neglect and abuse that greyhound rescue groups report to the media seem shrugged off by the greyhound racing industry and called 'isolated incidents.'

shot. Some are left to die of starvation in cages.

A very lucky few are adopted. The hundreds of cases of neglect and abuse that greyhound rescue groups report to the media seem shrugged off by the greyhound racing industry and

called "isolated incidents." Racing is a money maker and because of it greyhounds die, but first they suffer. They live in cages, are kept underweight, some are abused. My own greyhound's body is riddled with scars.

Four things we can do to help:

1. Attend a golf outing sponsored by Michigan's most active rescue group on May 11 to help raise money for greyhound rescue and rehabilitation. It's \$100 and includes open range, radio drink ticket, 18 holes with golf cart, light lunch and dinner.
2. Never attend a greyhound race and urge others to do the same. (There are no tracks in Michigan. There are

many in Florida, Arizona, Connecticut, Texas, Alabama, Kansas and more.)

3. Adopt a greyhound. Visit www.rescuedgreyhounds.org

4. Foster a greyhound

Retired Greyhounds as Pets needs money to help with its rescue missions. They've helped greyhounds who've been shot, whose legs were broken, who have cancer, who need teeth cleaned, who need vaccinations, who are emaciated, etc.

REGAP's third annual Golf to Save Greyhounds is at Cattails Golf Club in South Lyon on Saturday, May 11. The planned event includes an open driving

Please see EVENT, C11